

## Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Meeting of the Directors

### Meeting Minutes

#### I. Roll call

##### A. Members Present:

1. *Town of Owasco* - Ed Wagner
2. *Cayuga County*- Aileen McNabb-Coleman

##### B. Directors Present:

1. *Town of Owasco* - Ed Wagner
2. *Cayuga County*- Aileen McNabb -Coleman
3. *Town of Niles* – Joan Jayne
4. *Town of Scipio* – Vivian Cunningham
5. *Village of Moravia* – Michelle Lyon
6. *Town of Fleming* - Don Oltz
7. *Town of Moravia* - Terry Baxter

##### C. Ex-Officio Members and Partners Present:

1. *Cayuga County Planning Department* - Michele Wunderlich
2. *Cornell Cooperative Extension* - Ron Kuck
3. *City of Auburn Chief Water Plant Operator* - John West
4. *Owasco Watershed Lake Association* - Dr. Dana Hall, David Carr

##### D. OLWMC Staff Present:

1. *Executive Director* - Dr. Adam Effler
2. *Lead Watershed Inspector* - Drew Snell
3. *Watershed Inspector* - Ally Berry

##### E. Absent Members and Directors:

1. *City of Auburn* - Debby McCormick
2. *Town of Locke* - Thane Benson
3. *Village of Moravia* - Gary Mulvaney
4. *Village of Groton* - Nancy Niswender
5. *Town of Summerhill* - Charles Ripley
6. *Town of Sennett* - Tom Gray

#### II. Meeting of Board of Directors

- A. Called by Dr. Adam Effler at 10:05AM

#### III. Approval of the Agenda

- A. Terry Baxter motioned to approve the agenda.
  1. Vivian Cunningham seconded the motion.
  2. No discussion: Motion carried unanimously.

#### IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes (May 18th, 2021)

- A. Joan Jayne motioned to approve the meeting minutes.

1. Vivian Cunningham seconded the motion.
2. No discussion: Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Public to be Heard**

- A. No public to be heard.

**VI. Directors Summary**

- A. Joan Jayne requested reading by Dr. Adam Effler

1. Rules and Regulations Update

- a) Awaiting responses from NYSDOH Bureau of Water Supply Protection
- b) Endorsement letters delivered by:
  - (1) Senators [Mannion] and [Helming]
  - (2) Assembly members [Kelles] and [Lemondes]
    - (a) Senator [Oberokers] to deliver endorsement letter
- c) A public webinar on the regulatory update process was held on Wednesday, June 9th at 1PM
  - (1) Presenters:
    - (a) Dan Shapley, Co-director of Science and Patrol Program of Riverkeeper
    - (b) Martin Daly, Director of Water Quality Programs of the Capital District, Regional Planning Commission
    - (c) Steve Lynch, Director of Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development
  - (2) 120 attendees included:
    - (a) NYSDOH
    - (b) NYSDEC
    - (c) Municipal representatives
    - (d) Non-governmental organizations

2. Lake Friendly Living Awareness Week

- a) Webinar series held the first week of May 2021 (438 registrants)
  - (1) The Lake Friendly Living Coalition of the Finger Lakes is looking to host the event annually
    - (a) Annual event was endorsed by NYS Assembly
- b) Webinars are available on the Coalition's website
- c) Martin Point Homeowners Association agreed to have Certified Pesticide Applicators reduce applications by 50%
  - (1) CPAs returned commitment to not use phosphorus in applications
  - (2) The Martin Point HOA is eligible to take the LFL Pledge
- d) YMCA and Owasco Paddles took the LFL Pledge

- (1) Ally Berry of the OLWIPD will provide educational workshops on watershed and lake safety to Camp Y Owasco staff and youth
3. OLWMC June Feature Article with the Citizen
  - a) Coincided with Wegmans LED Flare sponsorship
    - (1) Flare sales will generate revenue for OLWMC
4. Great Lakes Commission's Conservation Kick Program
  - a) In partnership with CCSWCD and City of Auburn
  - b) Will provide small pool of funds for producer-led watershed conservation projects
5. 2020 Conservation District Annual Report
  - a) Available online for review
6. NYSDEC Office of Climate Change
  - a) Seeking proposals for organizations to serve as Climate Leadership Coordinators to provide support to municipalities within or interested in the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Program
    - (1) OLWMC intends to engage communities:
      - (a) To encourage participation for climate change adaptation and resilience
      - (b) To convene transportation listening sessions
      - (c) To inform sustainable and low carbon transportation policies
      - (d) To assist NYS in reaching GHG emissions targets by a reduction of 40% of 1990 levels by 2030
        - (i) OLWMC working with Amanda Mazonni, Principal Planner at CNY Regional Planning Development Board on the following:
          - (a) Grant funding, and advancement of internship program
          - (b) Increasing capacity for the Town of Owasco's Climate Smart Community Certification
          - (c) Encouraging municipal resolutions
7. Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT)
  - a) Achieved public protection of 9 acres via conservation easement in Groton, NY
    - (1) Within the Owasco Lake Watershed, which features wetlands, agricultural fields, mature woodlands, and ~5,000

- feet of the Owasco Inlet
- (2) Land donated to FLLT in 2019
  - (a) Protection safeguards water quality and habitat
- 8. OLWMC and the The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
  - a) Working on land acquisition via gift from TNC
- 9. Silver Fly Release at Fillmore Glen, June 10th
  - a) Top-down approach for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid control
    - (1) Predatory mitigation
- 10. OLWMC and the Cayuga County Drug Free Community Coalition
  - a) To educate watershed community on disposal of prescription drugs
  - b) To assist with procurement of 5 years of project funding to support educational campaign
- 11. Drinking Water Source Protection Program
  - a) OLWMC to act as future partner by selection of the City of Auburn as a municipal applicant
  - b) To be awarded technical support for 18 months
- 12. CCDOH May 5th Press Release
  - a) NYS Environmental Facility Corporation
    - (1) Round 2 of State Septic Replacement Fund Program
      - (a) Provides funding to replace old or sub-standard septic systems within 100 ft. of the shoreline
      - (b) OLWMC assisting with promotion
- 13. Hyfi tributary level sensors
  - a) Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development assistance with installations
    - (1) Sensors installed at Inlet and Outlet in all three Owasco Flats retention basins
    - (2) Attempting to link data outputs with SWAT modeling in association with 9E watershed management plan
    - (3) Ongoing efforts include replacements in the Owasco Flats, installation at State Route 38 bridge in Moravia (W Cayuga St), which is adjacent to the USGS station on the Owasco Inlet
    - (4) Landing page, data, and time series for tributary level graphs can be accessed on OLWMC.org
- 14. OLWMC soliciting buy-in from additional municipalities in the Owasco

### Lake Watershed

- a) Includes: Venice, Sempronius, Groton, Genoa, Dryden, Skaneateles, and Lansing
  - (1) Board of Directors may be of assistance in onboarding efforts

B. Dr. Adam Effler opened forum to Board of Directors for feedback and questions

1. Terry Baxter: Is the Silver Fly native to our area?

a) Dr. Adam Effler:

(1) Defers to Michele Wunderlich of Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development and Dr. Dana Hall of OWLA.

b) Dr. Dana Hall, President of OWLA:

(1) Silver Fly and a type of beetle are native to Hemlocks on the west coast, specifically Washington State and British Columbia. Cornell's Hemlock Initiative has been experimenting with both species on the east coast for ~5 years, and found no adverse effects of the beetle and Silver Fly, as they only feed on the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).

### **VII. Treasurer's Audit and Finance Report (May 2020)**

A. Dr. Adam Effler requested update from Joan Jayne

1. Joan Jayne: Through May 21 - Profit & Loss

a) Total income: \$181,300

b) Net income: \$73,967.22

2. Joan Jayne requested motion for approval

a) Terry Baxter motioned to approve

b) Vivian Cunningham seconded the motion

c) No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Dr. Adam Effler: OLWMC prepared and submitted documents for 2020 audit

1. Awaiting results. It is currently under review and near completion.

### **VIII. Owasco Lake Research Update**

A. John Halfman was not present

1. Dr. Adam Effler relayed Halfman's message: Research is underway.

### **IX. NYSDEC Finger Lakes HUB Update**

A. Dr. Adam Effler defers to Tony Prestigiacomo who was not present

1. Dr. Adam Effler to get in touch with Tony for updates

### **X. Watershed Rules and Regulations Revisions Update**

A. Steve Lynch was unavailable to comment due to meeting conflict

1. Dr. Adam Effler refers to Steve Lynch's process presentation.

- a) Webinar was given Wednesday June 9th at 1PM
- b) OLWMC continues to advocate and promote the update, and has been in contact with local politicians for endorsement letters to be sent to NYSDOH.

B. No questions or comments

#### **XI. 9 Element Plan Update**

A. Dr. Adam Effler defers to Michele Wunderlich of Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development

- 1. Next meeting will be Thursday, June 17, 2021
- 2. Finalizing calibration and validation
- 3. To update QA project plan with NYSDEC to start modeling
  - a) Modeling is in progress
- 4. To update OLWMC when prepared to look at recommendations

B. Dr. Adam Effler added the following:

- 1. Dr. Dana Hall of OWLA, Dr. Adam Effler, and others involved with the SWAT modeling have communicated the advancement of sampling efforts to inform the model for this year. These plans are under review, including the value of the Hyfi sensor data regarding SWAT model development.

C. No questions or comments

#### **XII. Owasco Flats Nature Reserve Retention Basin Project Update**

A. Michele Wunderlich of Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development provided an update

- 1. Construction is complete
- 2. Paperwork has been submitted the morning of June 15th, 2021
  - a) The grant ended on Friday, June 18th, 2021
  - b) On schedule
- 3. Michele thanked Doug Kierst of CCSWCD and the OLWIPD for construction and maintenance assistance this spring

#### **XIII. The Nature Conservancy Update**

A. Olivia was not present to provide an update

B. Dr. Adam Effler will follow up with Olivia for updates

#### **XIV. Evidn Update**

A. Evidn is an Australian behavioral science organization

- 1. Assisting OLWMC advance engagement of watershed community to foster meaningful behavioral change
  - a) The project is facilitated and funded through The Nature Conservancy
    - (1) OLWMC is discussing stewardship and land holding opportunities intended for conservation with The Nature

Conservancy

- (a) The land would be provided as a gift from The Nature Conservancy to the OLWMC via grant program

B. No questions or comments

**XV. Owasco Watershed Lake Association Update**

A. Dr. Adam Effler reported the following:

1. Dr. Adam Effler and Dr. Dana Hall have been collaborating to inform NYS representatives about the WRR Update process
2. Dr. Dana Hall and OWLA have been inventorying and treating HWA within the Owasco Lake Watershed
3. OWLA plans to propose a project through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for funding further HWA mitigation projects, which OLWMC will endorse and support

B. Dr. Dana Hall, President of OWLA:

1. Encouraged residents to check hemlocks for HWA signs and symptoms
  - a) White dots and clusters underneath “leaves”
  - b) Tiny black bugs suck the sap from the hemlock where the “leaves” touch the branch or twig
  - c) Canopy thinning and greying
  - d) HWA can kill a Hemlock in a matter of a few years
    - (1) Inform OWLA if you see any symptoms
    - (2) Dr. Dana Hall emphasized the importance of identifying HWA and revealed images for examples
2. Consequences of HWA and loss of Hemlocks
  - a) No natural predators on east coast for HWA
  - b) The west coast has fly and beetle predators
    - (1) Controlled release of about 1,700 Silver flies at Fillmore Glen with hopes to establish a population of predators
  - c) Hemlocks increase soil retention on steep slopes, and HWA presents a serious threat to the Owasco Lake Watershed
3. OWLA surveyed 16/65 ravines on the southern half of the Owasco Lake Watershed and found 12/16 were infested with HWA
  - a) OWLA funded a \$24,000 spring treatment program for HWA
  - b) Spring treatment is most effective via targeted insecticide spraying
    - (1) The work was performed by NYS Certified Pesticide Applicators
      - (a) 4 to 6 feet of the trunk is sprayed (360 degrees)
      - (b) The insecticide is taken up by the tree via sap when it draws up water from the ground
      - (c) Treatment lasts 5 to 6 years
        - (i) Will retreat in 2026 at around \$9 per tree

- (ii) Thousands of hemlocks line steep ravines and gorges
  - (a) Prioritizing treatment of larger trees with a large root mass
- (iii) Treatment season occurs twice a year: Spring (April 1 to early June) and the beginning of fall
  - (a) During the summer, the trees stop bringing up water out of the ground, and go dormant while the HWA are active
- (iv) During the Spring of 2021: 2,600 hemlocks were treated by OWLA that are considered to be watershed critical
- (v) OWLAs plan is to investigate during the winter, and treat in the spring and the fall over the next two years
- (vi) After 2023, “we might be too late.” HWA will likely advance, and many hemlocks may not be salvageable
  - (a) Dependent on donations
  - (b) OWLA applied to the Emerson Foundation for \$25,000 to fund fall 2021 campaign
  - (c) State forestry funding is possible, and OWLA is applying for funding for the spring and fall of the next two years

4. Dr. Dana Hall emphasized HWA identification and the threat to water quality

- a) Will begin treatment September 1st, 2021
  - (1) Fall season goes from Labor Day through November, weather permitting
    - (a) OWLA hopes to treat another 2,600 to 3,000 trees and repeat that performance for two years

C. Dr. Adam Effler inquired about temporary treatment, and length of protection against HWA

- 1. Dr. Dana Hall stated that two types of insecticides can be used
  - a) The first option is about twice the cost of the second option, and provides 1 year of protection, but almost instantly kills HWA
    - (1) Trees that are heavily infested may receive this treatment
  - b) The second option is cheaper, and provides 5 to 6 years of protection.
    - (1) OWLA prefers this method



- (2) Drilling technique used to inject insecticides when trees are near water bodies and streams
- (3) According to CCE, the population of the silver fly may take 10-12 years to sufficiently control HWA
- (4) There will likely be two three-year campaigns:
  - (a) In 2026, trees will be retreated from 2021, 2022, and 2023 applications
    - (i) The hope is that predators will flourish

D. Dr. Adam Effler thanked Dr. Dana Hall, and emphasized the importance of their voluntary actions

#### **XVI. Cayuga County Cornell Cooperative Extension Update**

- A. Dan Welch was not present to provide an update
- B. Dr. Adam Effler provided an update:
  - 1. CCE recognizes the OLWMC's growth of youth education
    - a) CCE offered donate materials, including a watershed model for educational opportunities
  - 2. Office relocation will allow relocation of educational materials
    - a) Hiring of a Water Quality Educator to be delayed until County legislators clarify their direction and priorities

#### **XVII. Partners for Healthy Watersheds Update**

- A. Greg Rejman, producer in the Owasco Lake Watershed, was unavailable to provide an update
  - 1. Dr. Adam Effler will follow up with Greg for further information
    - a) Dr. Adam Effler noted his assistance with the advancement of conservation in agriculture

#### **XVIII. Emerson Park Sluiceway Clean-out and Retrofit Project Update**

- A. Dr. Adam Effler deferred to Seth Jenson, who reported the following:
  - 1. Ongoing permit application with the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District
    - a) Currently in planning efforts of Phase II for winter construction to install something more permanent
      - (1) Potential forebay construction to prevent and slow clogging
        - (a) To be performed when the Owasco Lake level is drawn down (winter elevation) for increased access and limited impact to Owasco Lake
        - (b) Will likely be the update for the coming months
  - 2. Dr. Adam Effler relayed that Phase I was the clean-out

#### **XIX. Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division Report**

- A. Presented by Drew Snell, Lead Watershed Inspector

1. Occurrences and observations
  - a) No significant runoff events over the past few weeks
  - b) A few gully-washers passed through
2. The landscape is well canopied and covered/vegetated which is stabilizing the soil
  - a) Crops are in the ground, and are germinating
    - (1) Yields stability for gully-washers
3. A few fish washing up late spring, which is frequently associated with temperature spikes at the coves, as there is nervous system damage to this fish
4. Review of scatter plot and site visits
5. Summary for the month
  - a) No violations discovered
  - b) Routine inspections
    - (1) A few suspicious septic tanks are being looked into in Venice and Scipio
    - (2) Some road ditch disturbances throughout the watershed
      - (a) Provided examples of how municipalities are resolving those disturbances
    - (3) One complaint of a manure application that was reported before rainfall, which was tilled, so there was no threat to water quality
    - (4) There were a few stormwater site checks:
      - (a) One new residential construction site was discovered in the Town of Fleming, and one in Moravia.
      - (b) Commercial construction is ongoing in Moravia on Rt. 38.
    - (5) A couple of municipalities have installed stone check dams and filter socks, performed last year in Dryden
      - (a) They are still performing well, and binding soil to prevent the soil from flowing into the wetland downhill.
    - (6) New ditch protection effort in the town of Scipio on Hicks Road, which has been ongoing.
      - (a) The town and the CCSWCD are installing concrete sediment retention basins in the ditch
        - (i) Sediment trap is performing well (retaining sediment and slowing water velocity)
    - (7) Within the headwaters of the Inlet in the Town of Dryden, a large wetland complex on the outer-fringes of the Inlet
      - (a) Had been for sale for a number of years
      - (b) Purchased by The Wetland Trust
        - (i) Provides protection to the headwaters of the

Inlet, and The Wetland Trust has installed signage

(8) Ally attended Tire Collection Day at the CCSWCD, an annual event

(9) The LED Flare Project

(a) Canandaigua Lake image was shared to display the use of LED Flares

(b) Press release image was shared that is being promoted by Wegmans

(i) Wegmans signage in Auburn has not yet been observed

(a) Dr. Adam Effler to follow up on the status, as the promotion was supposed to start early June. He also noted his gratitude to municipal leadership for procurement when working with highway departments for LED flare usage.

(c) LED flares can also be used for vehicle emergencies

(i) They are magnetized

(10) Climate Smart Community efforts

(a) Town of Owasco is pursuing this opportunity

(b) Dr. Adam Effler is spearheading involvement from additional municipalities within the watershed through the development of template resolutions

(i) Resolutions are submitted for registration within the CSC program

(a) Funding opportunities are then available for Climate Smart Projects

(b) Interested municipalities are encouraged to follow up with Dr. Adam Effler for template resolutions and assistance

(i) Vivian noted that the Town of Scipio has passed the resolution

(ii) Terry noted that Moravia has also passed the resolution

(iii) Dr. Adam Effler offered additional assistance

6. Drew Snell provided parting words

a) He extended his utmost appreciation to the OLWMC members and directors

- (1) He stated that it has been a terrific pleasure to work with them and the communities to protect the watershed for the last 7+ years
  - (2) Through his observation, the residents and the municipalities of the watershed demonstrated a great appetite to protect the resources of the watershed, and he is confident that this momentum will carry on for generations.
  - (3) He stated that he will dearly miss the working relationships with everyone, including the members, directors, watershed residents, and communities.
  - (4) He wished everyone the best, and expressed his difficulty departing.
  - (5) His hope is that you will continue to be the shining model and light for watershed stewardship and landscape protection.
  - (6) He relayed that his cell phone number will become Ally's, and the new watershed inspector will gain her old phone number
7. Dr. Adam Effler and others extended their gratitude to Drew for his leadership and successful engagement and communication with the watershed communities.
  8. Drew Snell noted that since his time at the OLWMC, many municipalities have recognized ditch issues, among others. He stated this was a great testament that everything is moving in a positive direction. Ag, non-ag, ditches, and communities have outstanding protective efforts and acknowledgement of conservation.

**XX. John West Update on Lake Level**

- A. John West provided an update
  1. The lake level is around 712.70 ft., summer levels
    - a) Working to maintain that level and observing the forecast
- B. No questions or comments

**XXI. Communications**

- A. Dr. Adam Effler reported that at 6PM, the Finger Lakes HUB of NYSDEC is offering their annual HABs identification and reporting training. Interested parties may reach out to Dr. Adam Effler for more information.
- B. Joan Jayne inquired on the status of life guards, as Skaneateles is struggling to hire
  1. Ed Wagner reported that lifeguards are still needed at Emerson Park, and that Cayuga County Parks and Trails have received no applications to fill the positions
    - a) Joan Jayne noted that training is difficult
- C. Joan Jayne inquired about the enforcement of farmers installing vegetative buffers

on the edge of their fields

1. Dr. Adam Effler noted that the OLWIPD will assist with implementation and determining enforcement if the WRR Update passes

a) The Health Department would offer enforcement

D. Dr. Adam Effler shared that the City Council passed their budget for 2022

1. The budget included a request for \$10k, on the behalf of the OLWMC, that would be project specific in relation to the Great Lakes Conservation Kick Program

a) 50/50 cost share grant through the Great Lakes Commission

(1) Would total \$20,000, with \$10,000 coming from the GLC

(a) OLWMC is working with the CCSWCD, which has a project lined-up that would be well-suited for the grant

(i) Likely to take place this coming year

**XXII. Issues of Concern**

A. No issue of concern

**XXIII. Next meeting, 3rd Tuesday of each month (July 20th, 2021 at 10:00AM)**

A. Remote attendance will be continued

**XXIV. Adjournment**

A. Dr. Adam Effler requested a motion to adjourn.

1. The motion was made by Terry Baxter and seconded by Vivian Cunningham

2. Motion passes unanimously

**Minutes prepared by Ally Berry and delivered July 14, 2021**